

MUSEUM NEWS



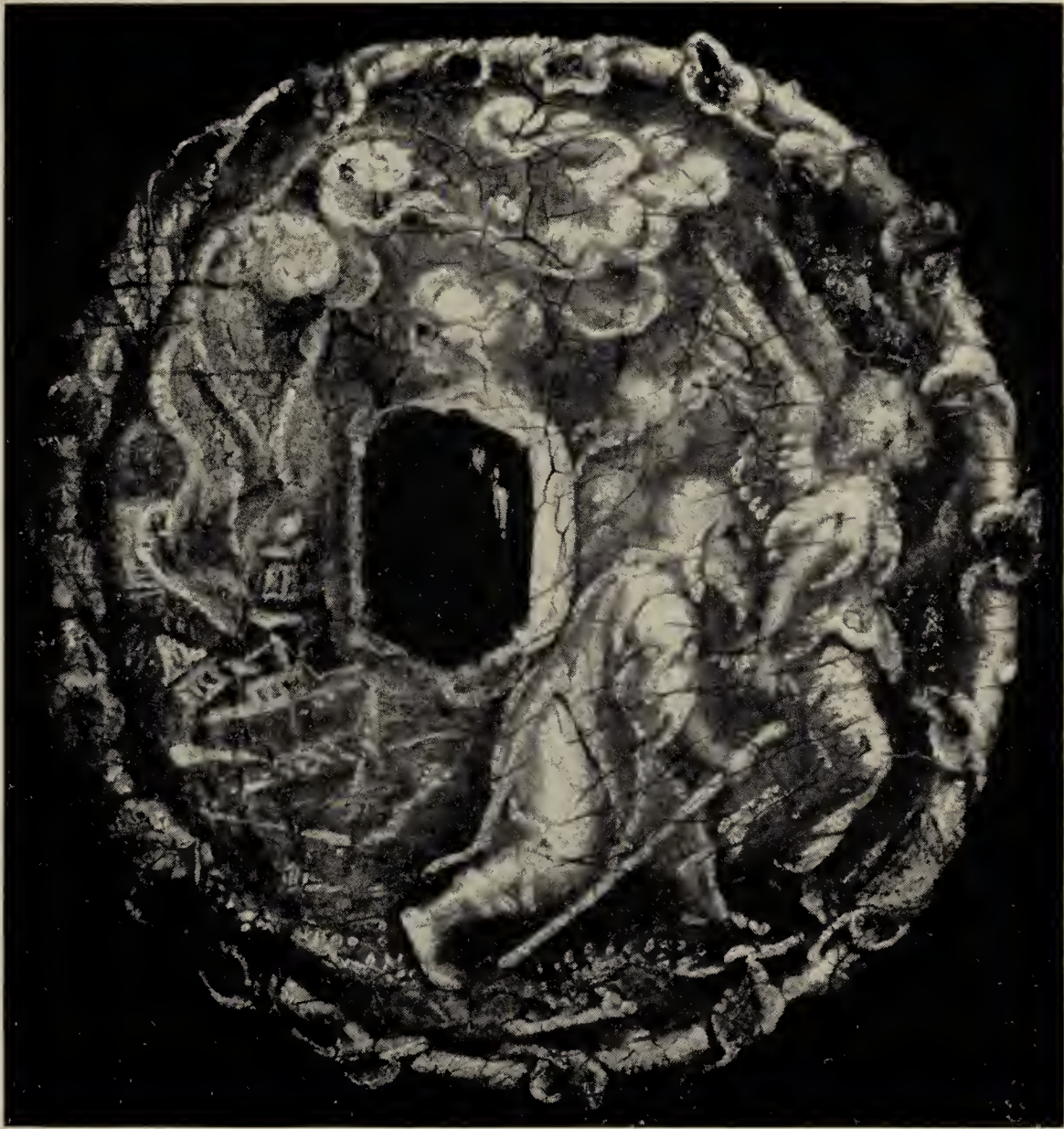
MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

NUMBER 100

TOLEDO, OHIO

DECEMBER, 1942



DETAIL OF THE BROOCH FROM HOLBEIN'S CATHERINE HOWARD

IN THE LOWER LEFT ARE THE FALLING AND BURNING BUILDINGS OF SODOM. FROM THEM RISES FLAME AND SMOKE REACHING TO THE TOP OF THE BROOCH. AT THE RIGHT AN ANGEL LEADS LOT. ABOVE AND BEHIND HIS HEAD ARE THE HEAD AND SHOULDER OF A DAUGHTER, WHILE THE HEAD OF LOT'S WIFE, TURNED TO LOOK BACK, IS ABOVE THE JEWEL IN THE CENTER.



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FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

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EDITORIAL

THE Museum goes on serving the people of Toledo in war as it did in peace. The attendance of adults and public school classes has shown a substantial decline since Pearl Harbor. That of children on Saturdays, which is purely voluntary, has held its own—and is pretty close to capacity. Business at our evening concerts is off somewhat, but the educational recitals are more popular than heretofore. Exhibitions and our own collections still attract a goodly interest despite the impact of war upon men's minds and gas rationing upon their usual means of locomotion.

We have undertaken a certain number of activities which have a definite connection first with the defense and now with the war effort. All of these are good and useful in the present state of the world. Of far more lasting importance is our regular educational work with the school children of Toledo. If we are to have that better world which all seek but which few, perhaps none, clearly envision, we can make no finer effort than to prepare the child for participation in it. An understanding of the principles of art, and even a slight facility of hand in their execution, enrich life and give lasting joy. Greater proficiency leads to remunerative occupation.

The annual donations of our Members, while they may seem small individually, in the aggregate are a substantial aid in carrying on our general educational work. Through the Museum you can do much for the coming generation in Toledo by paying your dues promptly.

HOLBEIN'S CATHERINE HOWARD

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER was a Northern Renaissance artist whose unified personality and international genius wrung success from turbulent times. We look to him as supreme master of portraits in the highly finished mode of the early sixteenth century, as court painter to Henry the Eighth, and as a craftsman whose capabilities and discretion adapted themselves to the vicissitudes of the Reformation and to a most erratic king.

Time has erased the mural paintings and shattered the stained glass designed by him to decorate the new-found importance of civic buildings and merchants' houses. Avarice or scornful fashion has long since melted down the Holbein settings for court jewels and the silver plate whose design sprang from his rich imagination.

Distracted by the Reformation, the Catholic Church receded from its role of patron of the arts, just as this German arose capable of the greatest religious painting, as seen in his Madonna done for a friend, the Burgomaster Meyer, now in Darmstadt, wherein the donor's family takes refuge from those troubled times beneath the very robe of the Virgin. With only drawings and documents to show for many creations, Holbein casts his giant's shadow down the centuries, because of the fine portraits which stand among the treasures of many countries.

The Libbey Collection brought to the Toledo Museum the portrait of Catherine Howard, the fifth queen of Henry the Eighth. Holbein painted her between her marriage in 1540 and her trial for infidelity fifteen months later. Formal, grave and flawless is this picture of an English queen whose face did not attain the role of beauty, but whose grace entranced even the French ambassador. The dark blue ground tinged with green, and the robes of black satin and velvet project toward us the porcelain freshness of the exquisitely painted head and hands. A circular French hood with black fall and gold tags dresses the smooth auburn hair. The velvet bodice is lined with white and lies open at the throat to light her face from below. On her bosom is the brooch bearing her personal device in the Italian fashion, depicting Lot fleeing from Sodom, designed by Holbein. Of this only his drawing exists today. Arcs of gold embroidery outline the opulent sleeves and spring from shoulders to wrists. Within their embroidered cambric ruffles her hands become almost another portrait of personality, elegant in their drawing, most delicately and firmly modelled in their interlaced form. So exquisite is the perfection of face and hands that our attention swings from one to the other, linked by

the decorative curves of gold embroidery on the sleeves. Holbein always painted inanimate objects with consideration and brilliance natural to the craftsman who loved many materials and designed in metal as well as in pigment. The figure is regally set in space, turned a little from the spectator, yet cognizant of his presence. Above her shoulders is visible the inscription *Etatis Suae* 21 which dates the portrait as of 1540 or 1541. This marking of background spaces with the age of the subject was frequent decoration by Holbein, helpful to later art historians.

His portraits came to their perfection with as little as three hours attention demanded of their subjects. The Windsor collection is evidence of the exquisite detailed drawings made from life by the artist at one sitting which served as model for him for the completion of the painting in his studio. These drawings were in silverpoint or in chalk, and one exists similar to this portrait of Catherine. Precise, yet graceful, his drawn line is exact and alive, nowhere more flexible and intent than in the outline of her open bodice.

The discovery of America preceded Holbein's birth by but five years. He rose to be the master painter of Augsburg where lived the Emperor Maximilian, and of Basle, home of the humanist Erasmus and the printer Froben. For him, as for other publishers so influential in the revival of learning, Holbein illustrated books. Two of these are in the George W. Stevens gallery. His *Dance of Death* series of woodcuts appears in the Latin Lyons edition of 1547, and Holbein's Old Testament woodcuts sparkle through the pages of a Lyons edition in French of the same date. These woodcuts impress one with clarity equal to that of large cartoons for wall decorations. By grace of his open flexible line and the brilliance of light surrounded by firm drawing they invent a spacious majesty and drama, although the little prints themselves measure not more than three by five inches.

From Erasmus, Holbein took an introduction to Sir Thomas More in England, who promptly found portrait commissions for the German artist needful of work since the failure of churchly patrons. During a second visit to England in 1532 Holbein turned to the German merchants of the Hanseatic League, painting these busy men in their offices in their walled town within the heart of London. By the age of thirty-eight Holbein was in the service of the king. His duties embraced portraits of the royal family and after the death of Jane Seymour, the even more delicate missions in foreign countries to record for Henry the faces of young women politically eligible to become his next queen. Christina of Denmark

in the London National Gallery immortalizes a girl of sixteen who was not chosen. The portrait of Anne of Cleves was so just a statement that even Henry's subsequent marriage to her, disillusion and separation from her, carried no criticism of the painter whose panel painted abroad and carried to London had speeded Henry to the unhappy choice.

Holbein's discretion and personal dignity, his creative ideas and supporting craftsmanship weathered arduous times and constantly adapted themselves to new outlets. He seems always to have worked alone, since licenses were needed for the employment of apprentices and no mention remains of any assistants. Holbein and Dürer are the chief glories of the German school of painting, but Holbein did his best work in England and his range of capability and breadth of invention attained an international classicism far beyond the qualities dominant in the art of his native Germany. His painting technique, the great drawings at Windsor, his sketchbook in the British Museum, his will at St. Paul's Cathedral remind us of the English setting of his triumphs rather than of his native land.

AMERICAN PAINTINGS ACQUIRED

MISS ELIZABETH C. MAU, long a teacher in the public schools, generously remembered the Toledo Museum along with other institutions in her will. From the payment of the first installment of her bequest three contemporary American paintings have been acquired. These purchases were made from the annual summer show held in the Museum during June, July and August. They are: *Girl with Bananas*, by Doris Rosenthal; *Yellow Roses*, by Furman Joseph Finck; and *Trees in the Pasture*, by Sidney Laufman.

Best known is Doris Rosenthal's *Girl with Bananas*. It contains a single Mexican figure, clad in white, holding a bunch of fruit on her head. Yellow green for the bananas, copper brown arms, and white clothing make a most attractive subject. Rich brown background echoes the flesh tone and sets off the other colors through contrast. *Girl with Bananas* is outstanding for the surface rhythm created by the curved shapes comprising arms, fruit and folds of the garment. The design is vigorous without being obvious for the figure has a fine plastic quality. Sensitive draughtsmanship is one of Miss Rosenthal's most potent means of interpreting the small Mexican.

Doris Rosenthal is a Californian who won a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1932 and went to Mexico to paint. A second Guggenheim Fellowship in 1936 gave opportunity for painting again in that country and she penetrated deep into rural sections to get



GIRL WITH BANANAS

DORIS ROSENTHAL

GIFT OF ELIZABETH C. MAU

material. Her New York shows in 1934, 1938 and 1941 created much interest in artistic circles.

Yellow Roses by Furman Joseph Finck is a pleasant complement to the other two paintings. Its silver tonality composed of yellow, white, green, and neutralized warm colors, contrasts with the warm full hues of Girl with Bananas; its repose seems quietly classical when seen next to the still but vital native child, or the sunny vibrant landscape. Finck, painter of portraits and landscape as well as still life, received a Cresson Scholarship for study abroad in 1924. He had been a student in the Pennsylvania Academy where he worked with Carles and Breckenridge. Today



YELLOW ROSES

FURMAN JOSEPH FINCK

GIFT OF ELIZABETH C. MAU

he teaches at Tyler Fine Arts College, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania.

The third new painting is a Sidney Laufman landscape called *Trees in the Pasture*. Like many of his canvases, it is a quiet scene deeply alive in itself, with no human beings to detract from its own flavor. The theme, simply meadow and trees, is orchestrated with innumerable shades of yellow and green.

Laufman canvases are not spectacular and did not take the public fancy quickly. Yet his solid craftsmanship and lyrical quality became recognized for he won the 1932 Logan Prize at the Chicago Art Institute and, two years later a third prize in the Carnegie International. Today his paintings may be seen in the Art Institute of Chicago, Cleveland Museum of Art, Minneapolis Institute of Art, and the Whitney Museum, New York.

In buying the three paintings the Toledo Museum continues the policy of keeping its collection abreast of the times. Miss Rosenthal's painting of Latin-American subject, Finck's aesthetic study, and Laufman's landscape with regional flavor give indication of important present trends in American art.



TREES IN THE PASTURE

SIDNEY LAUFMAN

GIFT OF ELIZABETH C. MAU

MORE ART OF OUR ALLIES

THREE exhibitions representing the art of important members of the United Nations continue the Art of Our Allies series for 1943. Opening Sunday, January 3, an exhibition of Chinese Art will be shown in attractive settings. Interiors will be arranged suggesting a formal Chinese salon, an informal living room, and a garden court. Within these a collection of fine art objects will be displayed. We were fortunate in obtaining from the University of Michigan Museum the furniture and many of the items which make possible this type of exhibition. In an adjoining gallery will be shown a pictorial survey of the Art of China from 200 B.C. to the present time. Photographs of the finest examples of Chinese art in America and European collections, supplemented by graphs and charts, will furnish a valuable background for the enjoyment of the exhibition.

In February will come an exhibition of Modern Russian Art. Paintings, drawings, prints, illustrated children's books and a small group of sculpture make up the colorful exhibit. Numbering about

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one hundred items, these works of twentieth century artists are circulated by the Philadelphia Museum of Art from the collection of Christian Brinton, noted editor, critic and collector. Some of the pictures, including gay and exotic designs for the ballet and illustrations of popular folk tales, are from the early years of the century. Others represent the robust vigor characteristic of the Soviet viewpoint.

The highlight of the March exhibition of Modern Dutch Paintings will be the fourteen works by Vincent Van Gogh, lent by The Netherlands Government. Van Gogh's brief but brilliant career compressed into the five years between 1885 and 1890 is exemplified by representative paintings. Still Life: Potatoes, a work of 1885 while the artist still lived in Holland, is the earliest example; Field under Stormy Sky, painted in July, 1890, the latest. Among the many interesting works is his Self Portrait, painted in 1887 in Paris. Sixty-four additional paintings by contemporary Dutch artists introduce names which are not so well known in this country. Several works are from the collections of the Municipal Museums of Amsterdam and The Hague.

THE GIFT OF FRIENDS

THE 1942 presentation to the Toledo Museum by the Art Additions Group is a sensitive figure study, Seated Girl, by Joseph Floch. The work is one of thoughtful and tender penetration and understanding expressed with great directness of approach and technique. The painting is beautifully unified by the carrying over of the dominating mood of tranquility into the composition and choice of colors. The directness and restraint in the work shows great mastery of technique.

Mr. Floch, while born in Austria, is a French citizen and belongs to the French school of painting that stems down from the Venetian colorists to the painters of our era represented by Renoir and Cezanne. Some of Mr. Floch's European paintings were exhibited last December in the Toledo Museum of Art, and a number of these, together with additional paintings which he has made since his arrival last year in America, constituted his first metropolitan showing recently held in New York.

His work received excellent reviews and aroused much interest in art circles as well as among the general public. Edward Alden Jewell, art critic of the New York Times, said of Mr. Floch's work: "This is painting of a very high order; perceptive, sensitive, assured. Color harmonies are finely considered; form is achieved with freshness and distinction."



SEATED GIRL

JOSEPH FLOCH

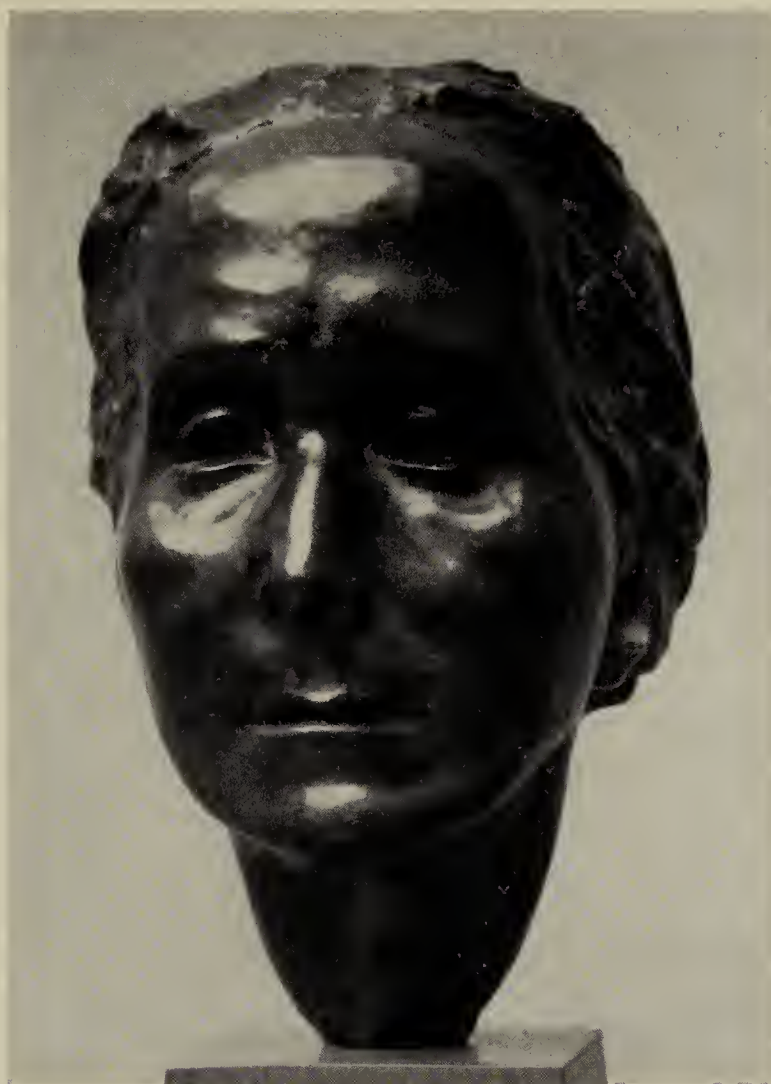
GIFT OF THE ART ADDITIONS GROUP

His Seated Girl now in the collection of the Toledo Museum of Art was the second work presented to the Museum by the Art Additions Group. The first was a bronze mask by Georg Ehrlich entitled Erica, presented in 1940. It is a work of elusive charm, warm yet aloof, predominantly feminine yet with great strength and an almost classic detachment.

Mr. Ehrlich is Austrian-born, and like Mr. Floch is represented in the collections of many European museums. He is now living in England where he is gaining a most respected place in art circles.

The Art Additions Group is, as its name implies, a group of people in Toledo who are not only interested in the Museum, but

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ERICA

GEORG EHRLICH

GIFT OF THE ART ADDITIONS GROUP

also in taking an active part in the development of its collection.

Believing that their enjoyment and reward from the Museum is increased by acceptance of some responsibility in increasing its possessions, they have banded together, each member making a modest annual donation which goes toward the purchase, under the guidance of the Museum directorship, of some work of art.

The idea was one originally suggested by Dr. Hans Tietze, annual professor at the Museum in 1939, who felt that several such groups might be formed here. He thought that the idea might interest various organizations, professional groups and clubs, whose members would enjoy the closer connection with the Museum and the stimulating experience of a personal contact with art. So far, the Art Additions Group is the only one to be formed, but it is still hoped that the idea it represents will take hold and have a vital and growing development.

MUSEUM NEWS

Our great Holbein is reproduced on the cover of this issue of the Museum News through the courtesy of the Illustrated London News. The plates, the best of several sets which have been made of this painting, were made in Britain, used in the Illustrated London News for November 20, 1940, and, despite the risks of wartime shipment, generously lent us for our use.

The Illustrated London News this year celebrated its centenary. Continuously in the hands of one family, its present Editor, Captain Bruce S. Ingram, O.B.E., M.C., is the grandson of its founder, the late Herbert Ingram. It has frequently published important possessions and acquisitions of our Museum.

For the article on the gifts to the Museum made by the Art Additions Group we are indebted to Mrs. Frank H. Canaday, organizer and chairman of the group. Mrs. Canaday has recently contributed articles on our activities and exhibitions to *Art in New Zealand*, the leading art publication of her home land.

Carl B. Spitzer, long a Trustee, has presented to the Museum a marble Roman portrait bust. Somewhat less than half life size, it is of a lightly bearded man. It was originally thought to be a representation of the Emperor Caracalla, whose reign closed in 217. It is, however, improbable that he was the subject, for so gentle and benign a demeanor has never been imputed to him. The workmanship and style suggests a later date, perhaps toward the end of the third century.

This is the hundredth issue of the Museum News, and even so slight a centenary deserves some comment. The publication was begun in 1907 by George W. Stevens. He frequently said that it was issued when we had something to say, the time in which to say it, and the money to pay for printing it. In recent years we have kept it on a fairly regular quarterly basis. We hope that we may be able to continue to do so, and thus keep our Members and friends informed of the News of the Museum,—its possessions, its acquisitions, its exhibitions, its activities.

The Chilean Contemporary Art exhibition which was organized by the Museum, on its return from the Pacific Coast was shown at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. It is soon to be displayed at the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, and will later be seen at the Worcester Art Museum and the Metropolitan Museum.

